Peculiar features of metaphorical phraseological units

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we have decided to focus on the term "phraseological pun" as well. In this case, the last component of a phraseological unit can have a "free meaning", that is to say it may lose its primary usage and may change the meaning to mean a different object, item or sense. This technique enables users of the metaphorical idioms to pay attention to more distinctive features of lexemes, to get into the meanings of ordinary words, to feel the expressiveness of a phraseological unit. In the English language, postpositional component of a metaphorical expression is usually used in a different meaning.

Keywords: phraseological units, pragmatic linguistics, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphors, idioms, traditions and habits.

1. INTRODUCTION

Metaphors have become a point for discussion for long time but today modern linguistics has given wider analysis of the usages, functions of them. Metaphors have deeply entered many fields of society and science functioning variously and perhaps one cannot imagine his speech without usage of metaphor directly or indirectly, willingly or unwillingly at present time. It is not just a stylistic device now; it plays wider and more important roles having more functions in any language of the world. That is why metaphors have already become a learning point of not only standard (classic) linguistics but of cognitive linguistics, pragmatic linguistics, linguoculture, psychology, literature and even it may have some links with medicine as well.

Phraseological units play essential roles in any language because they make sentences more persuasive, colourful and expressive. Most of these idioms are metaphorical, that means that those expressions are based on metaphor in their meanings or structures. Metaphorical phraseological units are one of the most complicated structured lexical units whose component's similar features have passed to another subject, person or object. Metaphorical phraseological units make the essential part of language phraseology (vocabulary); that is why to focus on their peculiar features is very important for modern linguistics. In this article, we are going to analyze and discuss some main peculiar features of metaphorical phraseological units.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of linguists have worked at the nature of metaphors and metaphorical expressions. There are different points of view on the usages and structures of them. Probably, George Lakoff gave the clearest depiction of metaphors from a new point of view: "Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish - a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature." For long time metaphor was regarded only as a stylistic device, studied in stylistics mostly; in a very narrow scale but it was not widely defined as a means or matter of other language functions; George Lakoff proved that metaphor is not only a language (linguistics) means

but it is also closely linked with human thought and act. Metaphors are proved to have close relationships with a nation's culture, mentality, traditions and habits. We can state that metaphors are born in the minds of people. That is why we are right to say that metaphors have got cultural content. The most fundamental values in culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture. In modern linguistics one cannot ignore close links between metaphors and cultural sense.

As we have mentioned above metaphors and metaphorical expressions are a learning point of cognitive linguistics, it has definitely more close links with that subject. William Croft and D.Alan Cruse describe link between metaphors and cognitive linguistics as the following: "Another construal operation widely discussed in cognitive linguistics, metaphor, also involves judgement or comparison. Metaphor involves a relationship between a source domain, the source of the literal meaning of the metaphorical expression, and a target domain, the domain of the experience actually being described by the metaphor. For example, to waste time involves comparing time (the target domain) to money (the source domain) in the metaphor represented by the Lakoffian formula time is money. Time is construed as a valuable asset that is possessed by human beings and can be 'used' in the same way that money is." As we see, George Lakoff's popular sample to explain the target and the source domains of a metaphorical expression has already become a ready-made formula to make notions clear related to metaphors and metaphorical expressions. An example given by William Croft and D.Alan Cruse proves us that there are clear relationships between metaphor and domains of an expression.

Josef Stern claims that "an expression interpreted metaphorically has, then, a "metaphorical meaning" in addition to a literal meaning. But this notion of meaning, it should be noted, is rather different in kind from what previous writers'; especially its detractors have assumed a metaphorical meaning would be. Its critics take the "meaning" of a metaphor to be something like the property it expresses in a context. But that is what I take to be the content of the metaphor in a context. On my account, the meaning of a metaphor is the rule that determines its content for each context, that is, its character.³

When a phraseological unit is used metaphorically, it means that it has got a metaphorical meaning, Josef Stern claims that metaphor determines its content for each context, probably it is correct definition, as metaphorical meaning is the main vehicle of metaphorical expression, it can be vivid only in a proper context. Metaphorical expression may have more than two meanings, only a real context enables to show its proper meaning.

In order to have much clearer description of metaphorical expressions (idioms) and their types we have decided to take an article describing types of them. "The metaphorical expressions containing body part words are those that have completely different conceptual basis and completely different linguistic expression in English and JSA. Moreover, the metaphorical expressions are opaque as the conceptual basis reflects the encoding of a culture-specific meaning. It can be argued that idioms containing human body part words may pose problems to the participants as the conceptual bases and the linguistic expressions are completely different in both languages. In addition, the metaphorical expressions reflect culture-specific senses." Examples to this type of metaphorical expression are: break a leg, pulling my leg, cold feet and etc. Conceptual bases and the linguistic expressions are completely different in many languages, as we know a language is based on a number of cultural notions including mentality, habitual routine of lives, traditions etc. These reflect the languages naturally, considering above-mentioned factor one can surely state that metaphorical expressions can be interpreted differently in different languages.

Conceptual metaphors play an essential role in forming metaphorical expressions (idioms) in any language of the world. Dmitrij Dobrovolskij and Elisabeth Piirainen say the following about importance of conceptual metaphors in forming metaphorical expressions: "It is evident that subsuming all possible metaphorical expressions of different languages under the same conceptual metaphor would be an important step of linguistic analysis. It would enable us to compare idioms with other kinds of metaphorical expressions and enlarge the explanatory basis. For example, expressions like to be down, to

¹ George Lakoff and Mark Johnsen, "Metaphors we live by", London, The University of Chicago press, 2003

² William Croft and D.Alan Cruse, "Cognitive linguistics", Cambridge University press, 2004

³ Josef Stern, "Metaphor in context", Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2000

⁴ Aseel Zibin, "The Comprehension of Metaphorical Expressions by Jordanian EFL Learners", SAGE Open April-June 2016: 1–15, 2016

be low on the one hand and to be beaten to the ground on the other (all going back to the conceptual metaphor sad/unhappy is down) are analyzed separately in the framework of traditional lexicology because of their different status in the taxonomy of lexical units. The cognitive approach allows us to put taxonomic differences aside and semantically and pragmatically analyze related lexical units across boundaries between taxonomic classes. Compare, for example, the following metaphorical expressions based on the conceptual metaphor difficulties are impediments to motion:

(7) English: to drive someone into a corner; to put a spoke in someone's wheel; in a bind; in a fix; in a jam; up the creek (without a paddle); in queer street; with one's back to the wall; there is no way out; between a rock and a hard place; caught in a cleft stick; encirclement; bottleneck; logjam; strait⁵.

Conceptual metaphors are the metaphors related to human being minds, to the perceptions of life. Human brain enables people to understand this or that notion comparing it with another object, subject, thing or idea. Conceptual metaphors are probably formed in the minds of people naturally and when it is needed they can use them automatically or mechanically; one cannot control this process: a human brain analyzes, compares, works out this or that notion as a vehicle or mechanism. That is how conceptual metaphors come out, verbs as "fall", "decrease" automatically mean something "negative" in people's minds. Conceptual metaphors can be essential means of metaphorical expressions as well.

What comes to the metaphor that motivates birth of the metaphorical idiom, we can state that their roles in the language are great. József Andor says the following describing links between metaphor and idioms: "The addition of morphemes results in a kind of shallow burying. A number of idioms exemplify the same shallow burying by virtue of a metaphorical word being incorporated in a relatively fixed word string, such as learn the ropes, leave the nest, give the game away, swallow a bitter pill, talk shop, etc. As idioms are conventional, most people would see a clear distinction between idiomatic expressions and innovative metaphors. However, many innovative examples are based on the same conventional, ordinary metaphors that motivate idioms."6

At present time, metaphorical expressions have become popular means of making something more colourful, creative or demonstrative. Annalisa Baicchi and Erica Pinelli claim that there is creative metaphorical expression that persuades people's minds to act more quickly: "Finally, along the scale of visual familiarity of a metaphoric expression, toward the most creative visual expressions we can find creative metaphoric expressions. Creative metaphoric expressions can be found, for example, in advertising, where a specific product to be sold is compared (in different possible ways) to another object, in order to allow the mapping of specific features onto the advertised product." Today creative metaphorical expressions are used widely in a number of spheres to make opinions more persuasive, more beautiful.

3. DISCUSSION

One of the peculiar features of metaphorical expressions is that objects' or subjects' some similarities move to people; this process gives additional sense (personifictaion) to the content of phraseological units. For instance, some simple objects may be used as living beings taking into consideration the similar features of compared object and human being. Pedro A.Fuertes-Olivera gives clarification to this process: "this broad categorisation comprises expressions formed with words describing objects we are constantly using in our daily life. The workings of equipment, for example, are used metaphorically to refer to the way a system or process works, or to show the feelings of animate referents, or to indicate actions carried out by human referents. Similarly, tools are instruments commonly used to do a particular type of work. Tools are used metaphorically to emphasize a process, usually one in which human actors are involved. Metaphors with words for vehicles indicate changes in people's lives. In the following examples we can see the triadic reletionship found in the expressions formed with words referring literally to machines, vehicles, tools. For example:

> target domain source domain sign run out of steam become weaker engines=no steam=no power

⁵ Dmitrij Dobrovol'skij and Elisabeth Piirainen, "Cognitive theory of metaphor and idiom analysis", Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Russian Language Department of Experimental Lexicography, Moscow, 2005 ⁶ József Andor, "Idioms and metaphor", Debrecen, 2008

or less active8

Any object, bird or animal may have similar features that can turn to the living beings. That is why most metaphorical expressions have got metaphor in their content and sense somehow. Felicity O'Dell and Michael McCarthy claim the following about idioms that are based on metaphors: "many idioms are based on metaphors. However, idioms are expressions that are used so frequently and are so fixed in the language that people often do not think about the metaphors behind them. The metaphors used in idioms are therefore much less original and thought-provoking than those used in literary contexts. People say, for example, 'The new president was / took centre stage at the meeting' [was the most important or noticeable thing or person], without thinking of the original image of a theatre."9

In this part of the article, we are going to focus on the main features of metaphors and metaphorical expressions. The word metaphor comes from the Greek metaphora "to transfer." With a metaphor, an idea is transferred from one word to another. It's implicit.

What comes to phraseological units we can state that they can also be based on some stylistic devices: metaphor, metanomy, synecdoche and others. Thus, there are a number of expressions that are based on metaphors. Metaphorical phraseological units can have both positive and negative meanings characterizing people, objects, places. Expressions that have got positive semantic meaning can give good content to the lexical units.

Metaphorical expressions are always based on resemblance. Resemblance is a key process to form metaphorical expressions. "Two objects, people, actions, places and others are compared and comparison reveals some resemblance between notions". 10

Metaphorical expressions can be divided into two main parts according to their formation:

- I. Phraseological units that have got exactly defined metaphorical transference whose basis is their meanings. This group of phraseological units is characterized by obviousness of expressive transference that lies on the basis of abstracted meaning of phraseological units and is based on the ability of cognition in searching for analogies between any real objects.
- a) Phraseological units that have got exactly defined metaphorical transference whose expressiveness is based on some real situations. Here we can add phraseological units whose expressiveness is based on natural phenomenon, animal world, the world of material things, human world. Metaphorical transference that lies on the basis of these phraseological units' meanings are closely connected with our cognition related to real life situations which serve as a source to form these expressions. Their expressiveness is obvious and tangible. Components of phraseological units explicitly link default meaning with metaphorical one. This type of transference is usually based on some vivid resemblance of objects according to outer feature. The metaphorical phraseological units of this subgroup are always vivid. Here we are going to present some examples of phraseological units whose expressiveness is based on natural phenomenon. A phraseological unit "tip of the iceberg" is defined as "a small, noticeable part of a problem, the total size of which is really much greater" in Cambridge dictionary. 11 In this phraseological unit a small, noticeable part of a problem is compared to "the tip of the iceberg" which really exists in nature. Hearing this idiom one can just picture the image of a small, visible part of iceberg to his mind whose main part is hidden under water. One can easily understand the meaning of this idiom at once using his or her cognitive skills. There are a number of phraseological units belonging to this group, this happens because human beings are able to think over this or that situation, analyze, compare, conclude; cognition enables people to ponder over situation by coming to the right meaning of this or that lexeme. Human beings are able to understand the meanings of these idioms being based on their knowledge of the world that surrounds them. This natural process starts being formed in the minds of people from the very early ages as human beings begin realizing what is going on in their surroundings.

⁷ Annalisa Baicchi and Erica Pinelli, "Cognitive modelling in language and discourse across cultures", Newcastleupon-time, 2017

⁸ Pedro A.Fuertes-Olivera, "Metaphor and Motivation: a study of English informal phraseological units", New-York,

⁹ Felicity O'Dell and Michael McCarthy, "English idioms in use (advanced)", Cambridge University Press, 2010

¹⁰ Галяутдинова Регина Мадехатовна, «субстантивные фразеологические единицы метафорического характера в английском и русском языках», Казань, 2004

¹¹ www.cambridgedictionary.com

a) Phraseological units that have exactly defined metaphorical transference whose expressiveness is based on some unreal situations. In this group we can add phraseological units whose components' meanings are completely rethought or components are partly rethought. Metaphorical transference sets analogies and associations between various systems of notions. In this case, one should find out falsity of the statement to perceive metaphors' meanings correctly. This subgroup is also divided into two small subgroups: metaphorical phraseological units with full rethought meaning and partly rethought meaning. Phraseological units that have got partly rethought meaning are formed as the following: one component of the expression is used in transferred meaning and its function is amplified; another component does not lose its primary meaning. For example, English metaphorical expression "pudding face" is partly rethought phraseological unit as its first component "pudding" is transferred, compared to the "fat, formless face" but the second component does not lose its primary meaning. How could one realize the idea, meaning of the idiom, how it comes out? Without any doubt "pudding" is used to mean some peoples' faces that are not pretty, fat by the idea that pudding has got some resemblance with a fat face. There is no another lexeme in English to give this idiom's idea as a synonym, it is a result of human imagination based on comparison made by the vivid resemblance of two different ideas. A human brain is always busy to compare, analyze, cognate, study the surrounding world of human beings, in this process, we are able to conceptualize some ideas with new, novel comparisons and concepts. We can add that rethought component of the phraseological unit can sometimes have hyperbolic characteristic feature, that is done in order to emphasize the expressiveness of the lexeme in the expression. For example, an English idiom "eighteen-carat lie" has got two components, the first one is transferred but the second component keeps its primary meaning, "eighteen-carat" has got hyperbolic features as the word strengthens the meaning of the expression. The idiom "eighteen-carat lie" is defined as "blatant lie". 12 Expressions whose meanings are fully rethought can be met in a great number in the English language as well. In some cases, such metaphorical phraseological units have got characteristic features of personification. For instance, an idiom "Queen of Adriatic" is used to name the Italian city of Venice; in this case, the city is personified being given some features of personification peculiar to the Queen. Feature of "magnificence and grandeur" lies as the basis of metaphorical shaft in an idiom. Fully rethought phraseological units can also have hyperbolic features as in the example "bull in a china shop" - the whole meaning of the expression is rethought here; definition of the idiom is as the following: "a person who breaks things or who often makes mistakes or causes damage in situations that require careful thinking or behavior". From examples given above we can state that human minds enable to recreate new, novel ideas of this or that lexeme due to the unique ability of thinking, pondering based on some knowledge worked out with the help of human brains.

a) Phraseological units that have exactly defined metaphorical transference whose current meaning is based on a lie (national) etymology. Phraseological units whose current meanings are based on a lie (national) etymology come out because of historical-cultural images of national language carriers. Real content of metaphorical transference that caused the forming of an idiom is now forgotten and can be set up only with the help of etymological analysis. Let's give an example to this type of phraseological units in the English language: "dead marines" means "free wine bottles" at present time, but its origin is quite forgotten. When William IV said to the servant pointing to the free bottles at the dinner time: "take away these marine corps!", an old major of the Navy stood up and asked: "Your excellency, can I get to know why you are calling bottles as "marine corps", with such serious name, I am also a member of this grateful Navy?". The very tactful King answered this question as the following: "I call them as "marine corps" because they have done their duties before me, being my devoted citizens they are ready to do it again!" and ordered to fill them with wine again. The King was able to evade the awkward situation at the dinner time tactfully. The origin of the idiom has not been known by most people who even use it daily but there is an interesting story related to its coming out. Until the etymological origin of the phraseological unit is not revealed one cannot find out how this idiom comes out."

II. Phraseological units that have unclearly defined metaphorical transference whose basis is their meaning. We should point out that there are not so many metaphorical phraseological units in the English language belonging to this type of our classification but there are some of them to be used in this

¹² Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners. – Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2002

¹³ Bobrovnyk S.M., "Etymology of English idioms", Національний технічний університет України "КПІ", 2016

language. The reason why expressive transference of these expressions is not clear, dimmed lies in the idea that there is no direct, logical connection between the meaning and components of these metaphorical expressions. On one hand, this condition (unclear, dimmed image of an idiom) may sometimes cause big problems to catch, understand the meaning of the phraseological unit but on the other hand, it is clear that this may motivate readers or listeners to ponder over a real meaning of the phraseological unit by breaking a number of cognition barriers on their ways. This process may probably enable people to use hidden abilities of their brains. For example, an English idiom "cat in the pan" has got the meaning of "betrayer, traitor". Image that exists in the meaning of this phraseological unit seems to be dimmed, unclear one as one cannot know why a betrayer is compared to the cat in the pan. This may cause some problems to understand the meaning of the idiom as we mentioned below, but this type of idioms exists in any language of the world. There must have been some reasons for an idiom to come out. It is better to use them in the correct contexts to make these idioms much easier to be understandable for listeners.

In this article, we have also decided to focus on the structural forms of metaphorical expressions. Idioms that are based on metaphors have quite different structural forms to be used in the language. One of the most frequently used structures of English metaphorical idioms is "adjective + noun". There can be given a number of examples to this structure: comic opera, close (narrow) shave, small beer. In this group, we have also included metaphorical idioms whose first component has an adjectival Proper nouns. The following examples can be given to this group of metaphorical expressions: Gretna Green marriage (A village of southern Scotland on the English border. From 1754 to 1856 it was a common destination fo r eloping English couples seeking to wed under Scot-land's relatively lax marriage laws), Procrustean bed (a standard that is enforced uniformly without regard to individuality), Augean Stables (Classical Myth and Legend) Greek myth the stables, not cleaned for 30 years, where King Augeas kept 3000 oxen. Hercules diverted the River Alpheus through them and cleaned them in a day), Gordian knot (an intricate knot tied by King Gordius of Phrygia and cut by Alexander the Great with his sword after hearing an oracle promise that whoever could undo it would be the next ruler of Asia), Siamese twins (twins who are congenitally joined together.) and etc.¹⁴ These adjectival metaphorical expressions are complicated to be used due to its relation to some historical personalities and locations in the past but anyway they are quite often used in the language; in this case Proper nouns are used to characterize the second component of an idiom losing its previous meaning.

Another quite popular constructional form of metaphorical expressions noun+preposition+noun. In this case, prepositions "of" and "in" are used mostly to link two nouns together in an idiom. The following examples can be given to this constructional type of metaphorical expressions: snake in the grass (a treacherous or deceitful person), pigs in clover (someone who is very happy and pleased is as happy as a pig in clover.). An essential characteristic feature of an English metaphorical expression of this constructional form is that both the main and the second part of an idiom may be changed with another lexical unit as in the following examples: in an idiom "pig in the middle", the main component "pig" may be changed into "piggy or pickle" or in an idiom "ass between two bundles", the second component of an idiom "bundles" may be changed into "bottles". The first component of a metaphorical expression of this form may be widened with the help of an adjective. The following example can be given to this form: "dirty work at the cross-road" (this expression is recorded from the early 20th century and may reflect the fact that crossroads, the traditional burial site for people who had committed suicide, were once viewed as sinister places.). An adjective "dirty" is used to describe the meaning of the first component of the metaphorical expression by widening its constructional form as well. Besides, the second component of a metaphorical expression may be widened with the help of an adjective: "new wine in old bottles" (something new or innovatory added to an existing or established system or organization.), an adjective "old" is used before "bottles" to widen the lexical meaning in the second part of an idiom.

Functions of metaphorical expressions may also have quite various usages. Usually we focus on two main usages of them: casual and occasional functioning of metaphorical expressions. Casual usages of metaphorical expressions are expressed in formal, lexical and optional versions. In lexical version of metaphorical expressions' casual usage we can state that components of phraseological units can be

¹⁴ www.dictionaryFarlex.com

replaced with other lexemes, that is to say with synonyms: in an idiom "beaten path" a word "path" is replaced with a word "track", the definition of an idiom is "something or somewhere that is out of the way or out of a central, popular or touristy area" or in a metaphorical expression "quantum jump" a word "jump" is changed with a lexeme "leap", the definition of an idiom is "abrupt change from one energy level to another, especially such a change in the orbit of an electron with the loss or gain of a quantum of energy." In this case, the meaning of a metaphorical expression is not lost but only replaced with its synonym. Besides, casual functioning of metaphorical expressions in the form of lexical usage may be characterized in the change of words of the same or different semantic field. For example, in an idiom "both sides of the coin" (two problems or situations that are so closely connected that they are really just two parts of the same thing) a component of a phraseological unit "coin" can be replaced with a lexeme "the medal" which belongs to the same semantic field but in a metaphorical expression "white caps" (waves that break into small white bubbles at their highest point), "caps" is changed into "horses", that is to say with a word which refers to the different semantic field, but we suppose that meanings of the metaphorical expressions above are not changed at all in any case; they keep their meanings and usages properly; the changing of the lexemes of metaphorical idioms happens on the complete understanding and correct comparison of their origins, meanings and images.

Formal and optional usages of metaphorical expressions do not touch the meanings of phraseological units and they do not change them both in form and in sense, besides the expressiveness of metaphorical expressions is not lost. Formal changes of a metaphorical expression may be seen in the following example: "riddle of the Sphinx" can be formalized into "Sphinx's riddle" or the metaphorical phraseological unit "dog in a blanket" may be used in another form, that is to say in a formal way "dog-in-a-blanket". These changes into forms of metaphorical expressions do not influence their meanings and semantic usages, the process of changing takes place formally in some cases. Optional changes in the forming of metaphorical expressions are quite popular in the English language. A component of an idiom "fly on the coach" may be changed with another lexeme due to the choice of a user; that is to say, he may change a word "coach" into "wheel" or a metaphorical expression "red herring" may be added some more components; that is "across the trail". These optional changes do not influence the meanings, functions of the idioms. This process belongs to casual changing of metaphorical expressions' functions.

What comes to occasional usages of metaphorical expressions we can state that such process is quite popular in the English language. The number of such usages of metaphorical expressions is more than casual functioning of them. One of the most popular ways of occasional reforming is wedging process which results in widening lexical components of phraseological units; that happens when an author or a speaker, user wants to exaggerate the meaning of the lexeme or phrase, to give more colour to it, to make it unrepeatable, to make a usual phenomenon unusual or extraordinary. In the English language, wedging of lexical units may happen in formal or informal languages in order to make the lexemes more popular and unusual; sometimes it may double the number of phraseological units' components.

Another popular way of occasional reforming is "saving language means" that helps the author, speaker or user of a language to economize his or her "language" (words, phrases and etc.) to mean this or that notion. Saving language means is based on transformation of a phraseological unit into pre-positive adjectival definition which can happen only in the English language. Thus, in the following example, the author economizes lexemes to describe the situation, he shortens his lexical usage of the words by using an idiom to strengthen the meaning of the sentence, make it much stronger than simple words or phrases: they may choose "black sheep" friends and lovers. They may be unable to commit to a member of the opposite sex or to a career" (Cloud H. Boundaries). Here a metaphorical expression "black sheep" (a person who causes shame or embarrassment because of deviation from the accepted standards of his or her group)¹⁵ is used to economize a language means, to make it clearer, more impressive, much stronger in the meaning. In the above example we can see the process of "transformation of a metaphorical expression with some adding (additional usages of some other language means)". This is a common way of simplifying the language by using metaphorical expressions to make the meaning stronger and more beautiful, understandable and clear.

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¹⁵ www.advanceddictionary.com

The technique "substitution" in the language may assist in widening phraseological links and in real it enables to make new phraseological units. We can state that there is a technique of "antonymic substitution" in the English language; "little" may be substituted with "big" when it is necessary to focus on the importance of the situation and to explain the conditions of this or that issue in order to draw attention of a reader to them. In fact, a metaphorical expression "little fish in a big pond" is used to mean "someone considered unimportant compared to their more significant peers", but when the author wants to emphasize the meaning of the importance of someone he may dare to change the idiom to give it new sense and meaning, in this process he makes a new idiom that can be used by others, probably it is one of the ways or techniques to widen lexical or phraseological power of the language. In the example below we can see the forming of a new metaphorical expression in the English language: "Can you believe it? I thought it was my destiny. A big fish in a big pond- that's what I wanted. That's what I wanted from day one. For a long time I worked for other people. Then I started my own business..."

In order to make impressive, colourful, unforgettable images in the English language authors may use a technique of phraseological saturation or phraseological complex that may enable the usages of two or more metaphorical expressions or just idioms in the same context. This technique is not used quite often in the English language but in some cases that can be met to make the meaning of the context stronger: we wanted to brief you, since you are the cat we are about to let out of the bag." "I rather think he's the cat among the pigeons," Dorotea said with a sarcastic snort. "Pigeons? War hawks. Dorotea corrected (McCaffrey, A. Pegasus in Flight). In the above given example we can see three phraseological units to be used in the same context. The technique "phraseological saturation" may help the readers to memorize the events happening in the literary work as they have got strong images and meanings.

In this article, we have decided to focus on the term "phraseological pun" as well. In this case, the last component of a phraseological unit can have a "free meaning", that is to say it may lose its primary usage and may change the meaning to mean a different object, item or sense. This technique enables users of the metaphorical idioms to pay attention to more distinctive features of lexemes, to get into the meanings of ordinary words, to feel the expressiveness of a phraseological unit. In the English language, postpositional component of a metaphorical expression is usually used in a different meaning. For example: "I have got a bit of a frog in my throat." said Suzy, still in the same deep voice. "A frog? Where'd you get that?" asked Ann enviously" 17." In this case, a postpositional component of a metaphorical idiom "a frog in one's throat" "a throat" is used in a wider meaning than its primary meaning, the author is playing with a word to give new humoristic sense to the word as a component of an idiom.

If we focus on semantic meanings of metaphorical expressions we can state that they can have positive and negative meanings. Metaphorical expressions that characterize human beings can also have positive and negative meanings. Below we are going to analyze some idioms based on metaphors which are used to describe positive or negative points of human beings and other objects.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion we can state that most idioms, expressions, phraseological units in general are based on metaphors, that is why they are mostly called as metaphorical expressions, idioms, phraseological units. They are important for any language as they make the language more persuasive, more beautiful and more expressive. Conceptuality plays an essential role in forming metaphorical expressions and if a human mind functions conceptually then metaphorical expressions come out mechanically. Metaphorical phraseological units are in active use in a number of language functions.

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¹⁷ Garth Nix, "Mister Monday", United States, 2014

¹⁶ Daniel Wallace, "Big fish", United States, 1998

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